Maryland
HC
107
.M32
no.298
FCLIC

298

WESTERNPORT COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

U. OF MD

Maryland. State Planning Dept.
... Publications.

WESTERNPORT

COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Prepared by

Westernport Planning Commission

and

Western Maryland Regional Office
Maryland Department of State Planning

Mayor and Commissioners
James H. Wills, Mayor
Robert L. Kalbaugh
William Mayles, Jr.
Okey E. Michael
Lacy Tinsley

Planning Commission
Alvin Pence, Chairman
Owen Lewis
William Mayles, Jr.
Robert McBee
Robert Nasser
Paul Roderick
Robert Shimer

Adopted
March 21, 1977

The preparation of this document was financed in part through a comprehensive planning grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, as administered by the Maryland Department of State Planning.

8090627
Maryland
HC
107
.M32
no. 298
FOLIO

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Commissioners for the City of Westernport at a duly constituted and regular meeting have considered the proposed Comprehensive Development Plan, City of Westernport, Maryland; and

WHEREAS, said legislative body considers same to be for the best interest and welfare of the citizenry and public in general of the City of Westernport;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ENACTED AND ORDAINED THAT said Comprehensive Development Plan, City of Westernport, Maryland, be and is hereby adopted.

James H. Wills

James H. Wills, Mayor
The City of Westernport,
Maryland

Effective Date: March 21, 1977

Debra J. Toomey

City Clerk

CITY OF WESTERNPORT
MARYLAND

CERTIFICATION OF APPROVAL

I, William Kenny, Chairman of the Westernport Planning Commission for the City of Westernport, Maryland, having been duly sworn and appointed, do Hereby Certify that the following is a true and correct copy of a Resolution passed by the Westernport Planning Commission at a meeting duly called and regularly held, approving the Comprehensive Development Plan, City of Westernport, Maryland, and that a true copy of said Plan, including all maps and text therein and attached revisions made subsequent to the public hearing, is attached hereto and made a part hereof by reference:

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Pursuant to Article 66B of the Code of Public General Laws of Maryland, the Westernport Planning Commission for the City of Westernport, Maryland, hereinafter sometimes referred to as the Commission, is charged with the responsibility and given the authority to prepare a plan for the City of Westernport, Maryland; and

WHEREAS, Pursuant to said Article 66B, the Commission has compiled said plan, entitled "Comprehensive Development Plan, City of Westernport, Maryland, including all maps and text therein, hereinafter sometimes referred to as the Plan; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Westernport Planning Commission does hereby approve the Comprehensive Development Plan, City of Westernport, Maryland, and recommends the adoption of same by the Mayor and Commissioners of Westernport, Maryland; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an attested copy of said Plan along with the recommendations of each jurisdiction that commented on said Plan recommendations shall be transmitted to the Mayor and Commissioners of Westernport, Maryland; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an attested copy of said Plan shall be transmitted to the Clerk of the Circuit Court for Allegany County, Maryland, pursuant to said Article 66B.

Approved August 9, 1976

WESTERNPORT PLANNING COMMISSION

by William M Kenny
William Kenny

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Special gratitude is expressed to the following former members of the Planning Commission for the countless hours of volunteer service in the planning process:

William Devens
Herman Haywood
Paul Johnston
William Kenny
Father John Sleeman
James White

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2010 with funding from
Lyrasis Members and Sloan Foundation

http://www.archive.org/details/westernportcompr298west

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION	i
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	I-1
Community Facilities	2
Recreation	4
Municipal Government	4
Economy	5
Central Business District	6
Land Use	6
Transportation	7
Housing	8
LAND USE PLAN	II-1
Introduction	1
Land Use Goals and Objectives	1
Land Use Plan	2
Land Use - Residential	3
Land Use - Conservation	3
Land Use - Commercial	4
Problems	4
Rehabilitation on a Local Level	7
Land Use - Industrial	7
Land Use - Public	8
Land Use Implementation	8
Land Use Plan - Planning Area	9
Land Use Implementation	10
COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN	III-1
Introduction	1
Community Facilities	1
TRANSPORTATION PLAN	IV-1
Major Thoroughfares	1
Arterials	4
Minor Streets	5
Cul-de-Sacs and Dead-Ends	6
Intersections	9
Parking	11
Summary	12

List of Figures and Table

		Page
Figure 1	Density Control Zoning	II-5
2	Cluster Planning	II-6
3	Types of Cul-deSac and Dead-End Streets	IV-7
4	Cul-de-Sacs and Their Uses	IV-8
5	Standards for Intersections	IV-9
6	Common Mistakes in Street Alignment and Lotting	IV-10
7	Sight Distances at Intersections	IV-11
Table 1	Highway and Street Standards	IV-2

List of Maps

	Follows Page
Land Use Plan	II-2
Westernport Md., Vicinity Land Use Plan	II-9
Community Facilities Plan	III-1
Transportation Plan	IV-1
Comprehensive Plan	IV-12

INTRODUCTION

The town of Westernport, Maryland, initiated its first comprehensive planning program in 1964. This program produced the town's first comprehensive plan.

Now, Westernport has undertaken a second program to review and update its comprehensive plan. This program is under the supervision of the Planning Commission with the active assistance of the Mayor and Commissioners, the Maryland Department of State Planning, and interested citizens.

The town of Westernport needs a comprehensive plan because:

- It provides a way to correct past problems and avoid future ones by managing the forces of change.
- It establishes priorities which is the wise approach when operating with limited funds.
- It helps determine and maintain unified government policies.

It should be recognized that the plan is a flexible document that should be changed as the community's goals change. If this is done, then the document maintains its value as a tool for guiding the future of Westernport.

The current planning program will eventually result in six documents.

1. Background Studies

   This document examines the physical, economic and social factors which have influenced Westernport's past growth and development patterns - especially during the years since 1964. The report also presents projections on how these factors and trends are likely to affect Westernport's future.

2. Westernport Comprehensive Plan

   This new document builds upon the findings produced in the Background Studies and updates the town's previous plan. This plan establishes a series of goals and policies which together describe what Westernport's citizens hope to see their town become in the future. Following the official adoption of the plan by the Mayor and Commissioners, four other documents should be prepared under the direction of the Planning Commission to implement the plan.

3. Housing Program

   This program will identify the actions which the town should undertake to implement the town's housing policies as presented in the plan.

4. Capital Improvements Program

This program will provide a five year schedule and identify each necessary capital undertaking by cost and priority. For greatest effectiveness this program should be reviewed on an annual basis.

5. Subdivision Regulations

These regulations will control the layout and development of new subdivisions within the town. Orderly pattern of growth will enable the town to wisely spend funds for items contained in the annually reviewed capital improvements program.

6. Zoning Ordinance

This ordinance will specify the type and intensity of activity that may be conducted in specific areas within the town limits.

Population

During each decade since 1930, Westernport's population has alternately grown and declined every ten years. The most recent peak occurred in 1960 when there were 3,559 persons residing in Westernport according to official U. S. Census reports. Since 1960, the Census Bureau has recorded a continued decline in total population. The 1970 report recorded 3,106 persons - a decrease of nearly 13 percent. Recent estimates for population show that as of July 1, 1973, an additional decrease of 9 percent to 2,814 persons had occurred.

Primarily, the decline can be attributed to the out-migration of young families. This has resulted in an increase in the average age of town residents, a smaller labor force and an increase in the total number of senior citizens. These three factors in turn magnify the difficulty of attracting new jobs to the community for improved economic growth and the difficulty in collecting additional needed municipal revenues to meet the continuing demands for services.

Simplistic methods used to arrive at population projections through 1980 resulted in four figures ranging from 3,193 persons to 2,714 persons. Therefore, if no action is taken, a continued decline in total population can be expected.

The 1973 figure mentioned above only lends support to assumed population trends for the future. Clearly, there is a need for Westernport to take steps to alter the downward pattern in total population and to more specifically attempt to attract younger families to the community.

Municipal Finances

The primary source of general operating funds in Westernport is real and personal property taxes. A limit of $1.10 per $100 of assessable base contrains any attempts to expand or improve the quality of service.

The assessable base has not been keeping pace with the rate of inflation for goods and services. In fact, the most recent reassessment shows a decline in the assessable base. Loss of businesses through closings or relocation outside of the municipality has resulted in a reduced assessable base from both real and personal property.

Discounts on property taxes are important to those on fixed or low incomes and amounted to $3,209 in 1974. Population trends would indicate that the number of those who are receiving discounts will increase in the future while at the same time those who pay the bulk of property taxes are decreasing in number. The result is to place additional pressure on this revenue source to generate needed funds.

The special tax for fire protection is limited to 10¢ per $100 of the assessable base and likewise is tied to inflationary pressure and the assessable base. Reductions or increase in the overall tax rate do not change this particular source of revenue but have a direct effect on the total amount of general fund revenues available.

The second major source of revenues are service charges which provide for the continuous operation and maintenance of the water, sewerage and trash services. Service charges are flexible and have been increased to keep pace with rising costs. Service charges have been the best means of providing adequate revenues for these key services.

Federal and State grants for major capital improvements and to some extent operational programs have been a third major source of revenue. Though grants are an important source of revenues for major capital improvements, operation and maintenance over the long life of a particular facility must generally be paid for from local revenues. These long term costs must be carefully assessed before initiating major projects, particularly since local revenue sources are limited. Some operational grants are available but as in the case of the new rescue service, after one year Westernport must assume the financial cost of this service. Police protection grants have fluctuated each year and are necessary to maintain this important service.

General revenue sharing has been a significant addition to Westernport's revenue picture. Current legislation limits the life of general revenue sharing to 1977. Special revenue sharing in the form currently before Congress is unlikely to be a source of funds for Westernport since it is geared to metropolitan areas and urban counties.

Shared taxes from the State and county increase proportionately with State and county tax increases. These shared taxes have been at a relatively stable level for the past thirteen years.

County road maintenance appropriations are fixed per mile of road within the jurisdiction. The amount received from this source has remained unchanged.

Adequate bonding capacity is available to Westernport for financing major expenditures. However, the pressure on local revenue dictates careful consideration of long term bond retirement. Ad valorum taxes could be utilized to offset tax limitations imposed by the charter. Service charges can be utilized to retire debts. An ad valorum tax was pledged to pay for water service bonds, but has never been used since service charges have been adequate and since they more evenly apportion charges among users. Bonding authorities around the State recommend that a realistic ceiling on bonded indebtedness is a range from 5 to 10 percent of the assessable base depending on whether or not the bonds are general obligation bonds or revenue bonds. Westernport has an adequate bonding capability to provide funds for capital improvements.

Since 1960, total expenditures have risen predictably and steadily for Westernport. Also since 1960, the emphasis for spending has shifted from a concentration on a few categories to a more even distribution, and the number of categories for expenditure has increased.

In 1967 the town began spending money for the town's recreation program to acquire and develop property. Much of the funds for this have come from sources outside the town. Several other of the town's services are partially funded through revenue sharing and police protection grants.

For the most part the expenditure priorities have changed with the needs of the various services. The costs of sanitation and waste disposal have risen dramatically. Westernport is likely to continue to spend at least 45 percent of its revenue for sanitation/waste removal, streets and public services. The cost of labor, equipment and material is a particularly significant factor in these categories. Continued cost increases for petroleum products could have a profound effect on the operating budgets of the police department and volunteer fire company as well as the other services.

The costs of general government have risen, but only in a relative sense because the cost of government as a percentage of the total budget has remained unchanged. As the town's programs become comprehensive and the complexity of local government increases it may be necessary for the town to hire additional staff persons to oversee the various programs.

Because of the declining strength of the assessable base, annexation may be useful for expanding the tax base of the town. However, annexation should not be regarded as a solution until careful study reveals that costs and benefits favor the town. Also, efforts must be made to maintain the viability of businesses in Westernport because of their impact on local revenues.

Economy

There are a number of negative and positive characteristics at work within the community. The lack of new job opportunities and declining municipal tax base, lower personal incomes and an ever increasing number of elderly residents have combined to foster a poor economic outlook.

Westernport has the opportunity to enhance its economic outlook through a number of steps including the active pursuit of grant money; the redevelopment of the downtown area; and the development and sale of the Franklin Industrial Park. Other local factors that should be stressed in an economic development program include:

- an available female labor force;
- a male labor force willing to return should new jobs become available;
- improvements to major roads, i.e. Routes 220 and 36;
- location within 20 miles miles of the National Freeway;
- designation as an Appalachian secondary growth area which should be helpful in obtaining grants-in-aid.

The influx of new jobs and money would generate the capability to supply health facilities and public transportation which will further revitalize the local economy and improve the cohesiveness of the community.

Housing

The town of Westernport's housing is in good condition. However, some blighted structures are present, which present health, fire, tax and appearance liabilities to the town. The most frequent deficiencies occurring in the town's structures are lack of paint, lack of sidewalks and trash accumulation. These are generally easy deficiencies to correct and have relatively low cost solutions.

The vacancy rate for dwelling units in Westernport is comparable to the vacancy rates for the county and the State. There is a higher rate of owner-occupied dwellings in Westernport than in the county or in Maryland as a whole. This is attributed to the population make-up of Westernport (more older families, lower level of mobility, fewer family-formers) and to the fact that there are relatively few multi-family dwelling units. Because of the declining population and the loss of family-formers, overcrowding in Westernport is not a problem.

Most homes in Westernport are over 35 years old; 75 percent were constructed before 1940. The number of housing starts increased in the 1950's and 1960's. But by mid-1974 there had been only 9 housing starts in Westernport since 1970. However, the age of these structures in Westernport does not imply that they are deteriorating. Approximately 95% of the structures in Westernport are in good condition.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Service to the best interests of its citizens is the basic objective of government. Following this principle then the Westernport Mayor and Council have developed a set of goals and objectives that are contained in a comprehensive development plan for Westernport. The following statement is adopted as The Plan's overall development goal.

> Develop a community that provides the highest quality of life possible for Westernport residents.

Westernport traditionally has been a residential community that prospered with the fortunes of coal mining, railroads and paper production. Both coal mining and railroads, over the years, have changed their methods of operation dramatically, leaving Westernport with quite a challenge for the future.

First, with only one major employer for the Tri-Towns area there is a lack of job opportunities which therefore necessitates out-migration of young people.

Second, continuous out-migration of young persons has left Westernport with an elderly population trend. This trend will become more evident in the form of a reduced labor force, less potential for economic growth and greater demands on community services.

Third, downtown is seriously deteriorated. Over the past few years stores have been moving to suburban shopping centers leaving a serious commercial void in Westernport. Westernport must correct this situation if the needs of the town's citizens are to be met.

Fourth, municipal revenues are not keeping pace with inflation and the pronounced slow-down in the growth of the town's assessable base. The limitation on available money will necessitate careful planning and programming of all municipal services and facilities. This obviates the need for Westernport to stimulate the local economy to provide jobs and downtown redevelopment.

Five, the comprehensive plan adopted in 1964 on page 4 speaks of "... the pessimism of hard times." Certainly community attributes play a vital role in the town's ability to overcome the challenge of preparing for a better tomorrow. The goals and objectives contained here offer a way to meet this challenge.

A goal is a long-range general guideline . The ideal situation that the goal represents is something which is achieved following a sustained and comprehensive effort.

An objective is a short-range guideline or operating principle of the town. Objectives are more specific in topic and offer direct policies for achievement over a short period of time. Successes in attaining objectives culminate in the reaching of a goal.

The goals and objectives contained here represent a program that Westernport should undertake to overcome the combined challenges of geography, population patterns, local economy. These principles will bring to fruition the more specific and detailed plan elements described in the body of the comprehensive plan.

The organization of this chapter is further divided into two parts. First, each functional element of the plan is listed and is immediately followed by a goal for that element Secondly, under each plan element, i.e. community facilities, land use, economy, etc., there are several statements of objectives that are steps toward the town's development goals and may set policy to guide the decisions made by the elected officials of Westernport.

A. Community Facilities

Goal - Provide the widest possible range of community services for all citizens with maximum efficiency.

Police

1. Provide training and up-to-date equipment for the police department.

2. Maintain a minimum force of five police officers to provide 24 hour service.

3. Develop a program to establish direct communications with law enforcement personnel.

4. Explore other avenues of funding to increase police protection capability.

Fire Protection

1. Continue to subsidize fire department operations including building and equipment through the fire fund tax. This permanent tax is to be solely reserved for fire company operations.

2. Cooperate with other volunteer fire departments so as to ensure areawide fire protection.

3. Repair, rehabilitate or rebuild those town thoroughfares that have been identified as a hinderance to fire vehicle access.

4. Adopt voluntary programs that encourage citizens to eliminate fire hazards.

5. Cooperate fully with Allegany County in the development of an Emergency Communications Center.

Health

1. Continue to support a well-equipped and trained volunteer emergency rescue service.

2. Encourage new medical personnel to locate in Westernport.

3. Replace the existing public health center building and maintain the social services provided.

4. Explore the possibilities of constructing a multi-service center to house an array of health care programs and services.

5. Seek cooperation with and take advantage of the resources available through the Health Planning Council for Appalachia Maryland and the county health department.

Library

1. Support the continued use and development of the county branch library.

Solid Waste Disposal

1. Continue to provide regular trash pick-up so as to maintain a good appearance of the town.

2. Coordinate with Allegany County in developing solid waste program.

Water and Sewer

1. Service all citizens within the corporate limits of Westernport with these utilities.

2. Extend water and sewer lines beyond the corporate limits immediately adjacent to areas that are most suited for development and where the developer will accept annexation to Westernport.

3. Expand sewerage treatment facilities so that package treatment plants are used only as a temporary measure.

4. Eliminate storm and ground water infiltration from sanitary sewer lines to increase the capacity of the sewage treatment plant.

5. Seek cooperation and coordination with the Allegany County Water and Sanitary Commission and the Upper Potomac River Commission in water and sewer planning and programming.

6. Replace and repair water transmission lines as needed so as to eliminate excessive water losses and to guarantee sufficient funds for future capital expenditures.

7. Install water meters to all water customers to equalize water costs and to better conserve this precious resource.

8. Utilize funds from water revenues to insure maintenance and improvements to the water system.

9. Levy a sewer fee based on water consumption. This action will reduce expenditure of limited tax revenues. A subdivision ordinance should require sewage system extension be provided by the developer.

B. Recreation

Goal - Provide a balanced recreation program suited to the needs of all citizens on a year-round basis.

1. Complete construction of the municipal park.

2. Develop a playground in the northeast quadrant of the town.

3. Promote the use of county and state facilities as a part of the town's recreation program.

4. Encourage commercial recreation activity within the town.

5. Require that the municipal pool be self-supporting and seek to develop a self-supporting program for other park facilities.

6. Seek to develop cooperative activity programming with the Allegany County Parks and Recreation Commission.

C. Municipal Government

Goal - Provide responsive municipal service to all Westernport citizens.

1. Adopt strict municipal fiscal programs.

2. Balance the municipal budget even if service curtailment is necessary.

3. Continue to prepare a realistic, long range capital improvements program in conformance with the development plan that can be amended where financial forces change.

4. Recognizing that some necessary and unnecessary municipal services can never be self-supporting, add or drop those services that could be self-supporting as needed.

5. Pursue grants-in-aid from federal and state governments to provide needed capital improvements after an analysis of the full impact of the grant program has been made and an assessment shows the town can afford to maintain the new program.

6. Encourage all citizens to work with elected officials in promoting the advantages of living and working in Westernport.

7. Promote a program of two-way communication between government and citizen.

8. Continue to affiliate with the Maryland Municipal League and seek the technical services of the Department of State Planning, the Allegany County Planning Commission, the Tri-County Council, the Health Planning Council of Appalachia Maryland.

9. Where possible, cooperate with Luke, Piedmont, West Virginia on all matters of mutual concern and benefit.

D. Economy

Goal - Pursue a program of industrial/commercial development that will yield a more balanced local economy.

1. Develop the Franklin Industrial Park for immediate occupancy.

2. Actively seek, in cooperation with the Allegany County Economic Development Company, industry not immediately affected by small fluctuations in the national economy, and which will turn around the out-migration pattern.

3. Seek employers who could take advantage of the high number of females available to the labor force.

4. Attract industry which is compatible with the environment.

5. Develop a positive annexation policy of adjacent lands to provide the space required for the future growth of the town and to further secure additional tax assessable area so that revenue to provide desired community facilities can be provided.

6. Locate social services in the downtown area because these activity generators will enhance the downtown as a place for people to satisfy their essential needs.

7. Encourage business to maintain the exterior of their buildings so as to present an economically viable visual/commercial image of the town.

E. Central Business Area

Goal - Focus on the central business area as the economic place vital to Westernport's economy.

1. Develop a plan to redevelop the central business district.

2. Work with local businessmen to attract local convenient type business to Westernport.

3. Locate social and health services in the downtown to complement the area's attractiveness as a focal point of activity in Westernport.

4. Encourage added parking and pedestrian walkways by permitting developers to seek higher densities or multi-use structures.

5. Permit the construction of apartments in the central area.

6. Develop design guidelines to enhance the visual impact of the business area.

F. Land Use

Goal - Maximize the use of scarce developable land.

1. Develop a program with Allegany County to focus urban development within Westernport as opposed to a "sprawl" of development along Routes 135 and 36.

2. Development should occur in those areas where annexation is fiscally possible and where community facilities can be logically extended.

3. Implement necessary ordinances to carry out the land use proposals of the comprehensive plan.

4. Develop land use ordinances in accord with the land's capability and suitability for development.

5. Work with Allegany County, the coal industry and related state agencies to develop strip mining policies so as to protect the integrity of Westernport's environment.

6. Develop and adopt flood plain ordinances to maintain eligibility in the flood insurance program.

7. Require all new development to prepare and build storm water management systems and initiate a total town program to control storm water runoff.

8. Maintain the residential character of the town while providing necessary commercial, light industrial, and public services within the town.

9. Provide adequate open space for recreational opportunities as well as to promote a healthful environment.

10. Develop a policy for extending town services as a means of controlling land use to designated service areas.

11. Work with Allegany County to develop services areas that allow for a development pattern consistent with Westernport's needs and programs.

G. Transportation

Goal - Develop a transportation system that symtematically moves all citizens and goods in an efficient manner regardless of the mode of travel.

1. Eliminate hazardous intersections in the older established portions of town.

2. Establish a functional classification of streets so as to separate local traffic from through traffic.

3. Encourage citizens to utilize the countywide transit system now serving Westernport.

4. Maximize efforts to relocate the Piedmont Bridge in a more favorable alignment with relocated Route 36.

5. Consider the concept of a mall through the commercial area by closing Main Street between Route 135 and Washington Street.

6. Eliminate dead ends where possible by constructing new connectors, cul-de-sacs, or turn-arounds.

7. Provide additional off-street parking in the central area and Maryland Avenue. Work with developers to initiate a program to provide off-street parking spaces.

8. Adopt a weight limit ordinance for town streets.

9. Encourage the county to build needed roads to the ridge tops east/west of town to take intercounty traffic off of town streets.

10. Erect street lights and signs where needed.

11. Coordinate all street construction with other town and county agencies.

12. Continue to deliver a good street maintenance program.

13. Increase accessibility to all community activity - even for those without cars.

H. Housing

Goal - Develop a program to insure that all families have an opportunity to be adequately housed.

1. Adjust Westernport's housing situation to attract younger households.

2. Insure demolition of all dilapidated structures.

3. Provide for a variety of housing types to meet the incomes of all Westernport residents.

4. Promote a clean-up, fix-up program so as to maintain the appearance and the quality of existing housing.

5. Acquire homes that are a detriment to natural land uses and/or those that present an extreme hazard to traffic safety.

6. Develop a relocation program for all residents displaced by the growth and development of Westernport.

7. Provide for the proper development of multi-family units and discourage the conversion of single family homes into multi-family units.

LAND USE PLAN

Introduction

The background land use study environmental assessment results in land use goals as listed below and portrayed on Map #1 - Land Use Plan. Recommendations for land use beyond the municipal boundary are portrayed in Map #2 - Land Use Plan: Vicinity.

Land Use Goals and Objectives

Goal - Maximize the use of scarce developable land.

1. Develop a program with Allegany County to focus urban development within Westernport as opposed to a "sprawl" of development along Routes 135 and 36.

2. Development should occur in those areas where annexation is fiscally possible and where community facilities can be logically extended.

3. Implement necessary ordinances to carry out the land use proposals of the comprehensive plan.

4. Develop land use ordinances in accord with the land's capability and suitability for development.

5. Work with Allegany County, the coal industry and related state agencies to develop strip mining policies so as to protect the integrity of Westernport's environment.

6. Develop and adopt flood plain ordinances to maintain eligibility in the flood insurance program.

7. Require all new development to prepare and build storm water management systems and initiate a total town program to control storm water runoff.

8. Maintain the residential character of the town while providing necessary commercial, light industrial and public services within the town.

9. Provide adequate open space for recreational opportunities as well as to promote a healthful environment.

10. Develop a policy for extending town services as a means of controlling land use in lieu of any adopted ordinances.

Land Use Plan

Traditionally, Westernport has been a residential community with the majority of commercial activity centered in Piedmont, West Virginia, and industrial jobs centered in Luke, and with extractive industry jobs available in the coal fields. Westernport continues to maintain its residential quality but commercial activity in Westernport and Piedmont has either migrated to suburban locations or closed down permanently. Industrial jobs continue to be available in Luke. Virtually no jobs are available in the coal industry due to new mechanized processes now practiced.

The land use plan will provide for the retention of the town's character as a place to live by providing opportunities for several housing alternatives for the needs of all age and income groups. Commercial and industrial activity is recognized as essential for a balanced local economy and it is therefore recommended in the plan that a vigorous campaign begin to reestablish Westernport's commercial center and to finalize the development of the industrial park for immediate occupancy. The latter activity, of course, will result in new jobs for the community and a reduction in population out-migration.

The background report examined at length land capabilities of Westernport and its environs. That analysis concluded that development must closely follow water and sewerage lines; avoid steep slopes, and be coordinated with existing development and all county plans. By careful adherence to existing or proposed water/sewer lines, transportation routes and other public facilities, areas suitable for development are readily identified.

Several recommendations can be made after examining relevant plans for public facilities proposed by county and state government.

- The boundary discrepancy in proposed water and sanitary districts outlined in the County Water and Sewerage Master Plan should be corrected to allow a more logical sequence of development that is of economic benefit to both Westernport and Allegany County.

- Westernport and Allegany County must coordinate land use decisions beyond the municipal boundary as the current county land use plan and zoning ordinance do not establish land use goals. This is an essential need inasmuch as the county has adopted a water and sewer service plan for the area which will stimulate development.

- The town must adjust land uses in light of the relocation of Route 36. The town must continue to push for a new Potomac River Bridge that will be more in line with the new Route 36-135 intersection.

- Westernport programs for economic development should continue to function with close coordination with programs of the Allegany

WESTERNPORT MARYLAND

LAND USE PLAN

- Low Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Central Commercial
- Local Commercial
- Public & Institutional
- Industrial
- Recreation / Parks
- Conservation

WESTERNPORT
PLANNING COMMISSION

THE PREPARATION OF THIS MAP WAS FINANCED IN PART THROUGH A COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING GRANT FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AS ADMINISTERED BY THE MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF STATE PLANNING

County Development Company. As a designated secondary growth area in the 1974 update of the Appalachia Maryland Development Plan certain advantages for development grants are open and should be pursued within the goals for land use in Westernport.

Land Use - Residential

The plan calls for the continuation of Westernport's residential character with its supply of well maintained homes. In fact, the plan is not a radical departure from the current arrangement of the town.

The plan calls for additional space to be set aside for all planned, high quality multi-family units so as to offer new families or senior citizens an affordable alternative to single family detached homes. Preferably, such units should be developed on the flat land along Main Street above Oakview Drive. The higher population density would be serviced by the downtown commercial center and would be near all activity and county mass transit. Off-street parking would, of course, be necessary. Open space in the area could be available should the dilapidated structures on Railroad Street be torn down, as they stand in an unprotected flood prone area.

Vacant properties in existing neighborhoods and slopes less than 30 percent grade are set aside for single and double family homes. New homes should be clustered so that the overall density of the development is a desired maximum but the builder does not have to construct a grid pattern of streets which is unadaptable to topography and more expensive. Advantages of this type of development pattern as illustrated in Figures 1 and 2 include:

- A method of preserving trees, steep slopes and preventing excessive storm water runoff.

- A unique residential environment with "built in" open space.

- An efficient use of land through smaller networks of streets and utilities resulting in lower development costs, lower municipal maintenance costs and lower purchase and maintenance costs to the resident.

The remainder of the town's residential areas should continue as they are today.

Land Use - Conservation

The areas designated as conservation on the plan map are those areas where the topography does not lend itself readily for development. These are areas that have slopes that exceed 30 percent or are flood plain/prone land and as a consequence development requires special provisions to avoid excessively steep roads, excess storm water run-off, water damage and other related problems associated with hillside and flood plain development.

The plan recommends that development be encouraged in other parts of town, but should development occur in the conservation area, careful review of the proposed development should be taken by the planning commission to insure that the development compensates for the special environmental restraints of these areas. Density zoning and cluster planning as illustrated on pages II-5 and II-6 should serve as a guide in the development of the hillside conservation areas while provisions regarding building on flood plains adopted to qualify for flood insurance will govern the development of the flood prone conservation area.

Land Use - Commercial

The planning objectives described in the original Westernport Plan adopted in 1964 for the downtown section have not changed.

The business district is the heart of the community. It should serve as the focus of economic, cultural and, to some extent, social activities for not only the town but also areas beyond the town limits. The trend during the 1960's towards a motorized and decentralized population has stimulated increased commercial activity removed from the central business area and in direct competition with it. The improvement of the downtown area is of vital importance to Westernport.

Problems

The nature of the current decline in activity within the Westernport downtown area and the prospects for the future were discussed in the background studies report. Westernport is losing constantly increasing percentage of its market area net purchasing power in the Tri-Towns Plaza. The reasons for this are, briefly:

1. Constantly increasing through traffic of automobiles and heavy trucks with their attendant noise and dirt.

2. Lack of adequate off-street parking facilities. Present parking facilities (not including those now to be lost to highway construction) provide relatively few spaces for all types of parking needs, and a few additional on-street parking spaces above Washington Street on Main Street. These on-street parking spaces should be eliminated in the interest of traffic circulation and safety. It would seem reasonable to attempt to provide 200 spaces or more in and near the core area with possibilities of future expansion above Washington Street as future demand may require.

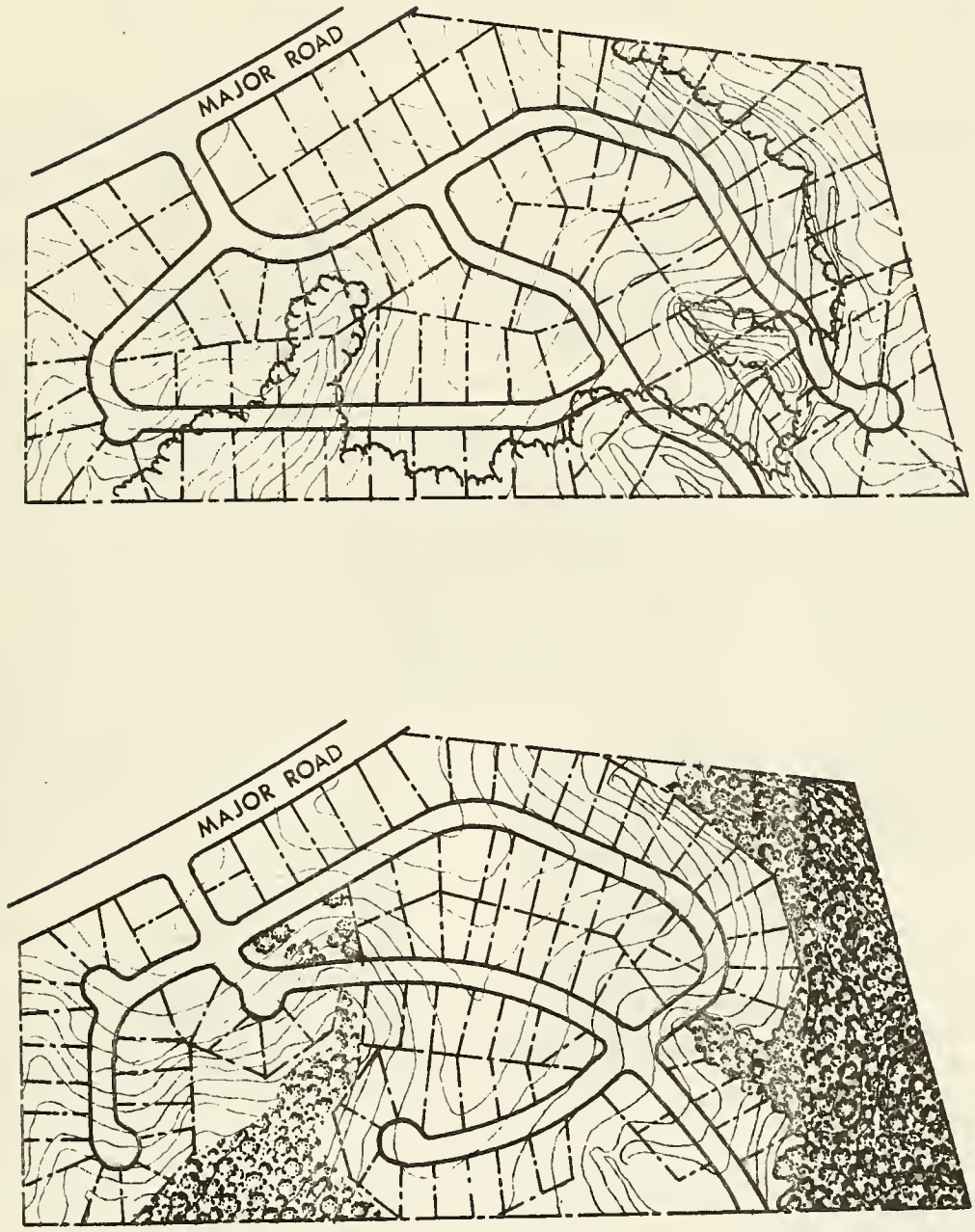
3. Mixture of land uses.

4. Commercial structures unpleasing in appearance and obsolete in terms of contemporary merchandizing.

5. Poor basic organization of the principal retail area in respect to pedestrian circulation.

DENSITY CONTROL ZONING

Figure 1

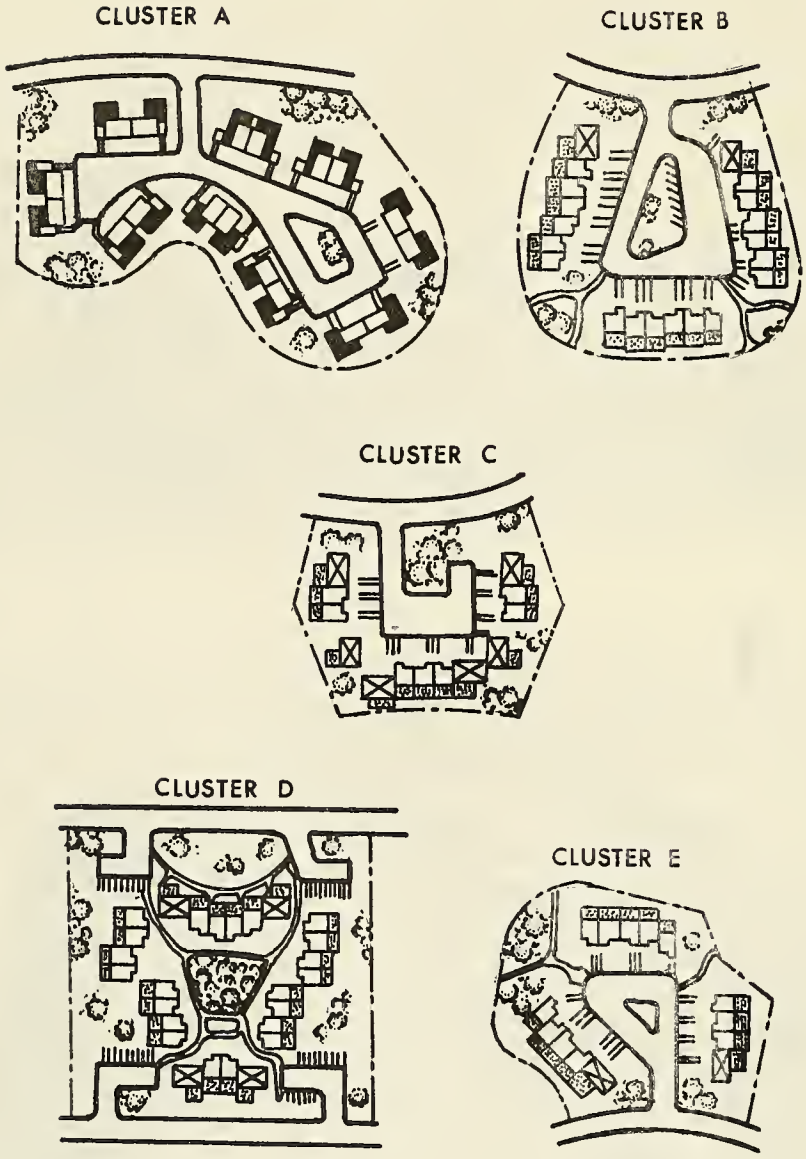


Upper plan depicts typical layout of a wooded hillside tract of approximately 37 acres.

Lower plan depicts the same tract laid out under provisions of density control zoning. The lower plan preserves the steep slopes and trees while at the same time providing the developer with the same number of lots as found in the upper plan.

CLUSTER PLANNING

Figure 2



An illustrative adaptation of single-family townhouse clusters to varying site conditions.

6. Uninviting atmosphere.

7. Lack of suitable basic units such as attractive eating facilities, personal services, variety stores, food and appliance stores, and others which tend to make an in-town or outlying shopping center complete.

The overall picture is not so bleak as the previous paragraphs might indicate. The success of the Tri-Towns Plaza shows that the area has the population and purchasing power to support an active modern shopping area.

Rehabilitation on a Local Level

As has been proved in many downtown commercial areas about the country, it is entirely possible that a determined and aggressive drive by local businessmen and citizens can overcome the difficulties of unpleasing appearance, lack of parking, and various factors which contribute to the decline of an area. The key to whether or not this is a realistic possibility is a careful analysis of the type and extent of the remedial work required. It is fairly obvious that the procedures required to dramatically improve conditions in the downtown area of Westernport are more than relief from through traffic, the application of new fronts and other window dressing, and the provision of additional off-street parking. It is likely that the major alteration of pedestrian and automobile circulation (beyond scheduled highway construction), the demolition of many of the existing obsolete and deteriorated buildings, the construction of new facilities, and the creation of a new atmosphere conducive to increased retail trade is beyond the economic and social ability of the town. However, an endeavor must encompass the whole of the problem, be broad enough to make a major change, and not be beyond the financial ability or the desire of all of the businesses and people involved.

Land Use - Industrial

Westernport has no industry. A property in the northern portion of town is described as industrial on the existing land use map, but the only use found there is a rail turn-around and a coal tipple. The sewage treatment plant rests on the only other piece of land identified as industrial. There is no land available within the present corporate limits suitable for industry. The Mayor, Commissioners and planning commission have recognized the desirability of industrial space and the related improvement to the municipal tax base and the definite improvement to the local job situation by fostering the rezoning and development of a 40 acre site north of town known as the Franklin Industrial Park.

This site is more than adequate for locating several small manufacturing firms. Full occupancy will offer a diversification of the local economy. However, like the downtown plan, aggressive action on the part of the community is necessary to achieve this goal. The number of communities competing for industrial jobs numbers in the thousands. Therefore, Westernport must continuously work with the Allegany Economic Development Company to locate a plant in this park.

Land Use - Public

Specific proposals for Westernport's public facilities are contained in the Community Facilities Plan. The present public facilities are designated on the land use plan map. Since 1964 the town has made a number of improvements to public buildings including the addition of a new library, municipal maintenance building, post office, municipal parks, swimming pool and fire department, plus a remodeling of town hall and the structure housing the ambulance service. The county has developed plans to remodel or rebuild the Westernport elementary school on its present site.

Land Use Implementation

Land use goals are attained through several alternative means. These include official policies, zoning and subdivision ordinances, capital improvements programming and building codes. The ten objectives listed earlier can be extended as a basis for official policy of the Mayor and Council. These policies would become a part of the daily decision making process of the Mayor and Council and they can be altered as conditions change.

The present zoning ordinance as adopted in 1957 provided some means of implementing land use ideals. However, the ordinance is badly in need of extensive revision. To be a useful tool in directing town development, this ordinance should follow modern zoning concepts and must closely relate to the land use plan. Some of the major features to be regulated under the zoning ordinance include:

1. Establishment of a variety of zoning use districts to insure compatability between future development and existing portions of the town and implementation of the plan's goals and objectives. These districts should regulate:

   a. permitted uses and intensity of development;

   b. minimum standards for lot sizes, yards and setbacks;

   c. building and structure heights; and

   d. access, parking and other facilities.

2. Protection of the town's natural resources.

3. Development of property in relation to the capacities of streets, local utilities and community facilities.

4. Coordination and review of any proposed development by appropriate public agencies.

5. Protection of the usefulness, enjoyment and value of existing development including residential, commercial and industrial property.

Maryland State law also allows Westernport to regulate land subdivision. Westernport did develop such an ordinance but it was never officially adopted and is now like the zoning ordinance - out of date.

Effective control over land subdivision guards against such undesirable conditions as unsanitary waste disposal or water supply systems; inadequate drainage; poorly designed, located or constructed roads; badly situated building lots; and inadequate recreation facilities.

Westernport should begin to exercise control over subdivisions through careful review of new proposals in accordance with an adopted set of subdivision regulations.

Land Use Plan - Planning Area

Westernport's proposals for land use in the one mile zone are summarized below and on Map #2, Westernport Planning Area.

Residential

Existing residential development outside of Westernport is predominately single family homes. One multi-family unit is found on Horse Rock Hill. The existing residential areas should be allowed to expand.

However, new residential development should respect the limitations of local topography, access and availability of water, sewerage and other municipal services. This development should be permitted if it is annexed by Westernport.

Commercial

Much of the success of a revitalized downtown Westernport depends upon no new commercial activity developing outside Westernport in the one mile zone. Of course a rehabilitated downtown will eliminate the need for business to locate outside Westernport. Exceptions to the rule may include gas stations, repair shops, fast food shops - strictly highway oriented businesses.

Industrial

Franklin Industrial Park is currently the only industrial site available in the immediate area. Until access and utilities are provided to the site, probably no occupants will be attracted.

The site is adequately sized to serve the industrial growth needs of a community the size of Westernport. Maximum benefits of an occupied site can be obtained for Westernport if the site were annexed.

Open Space

Much of the land in the planning area should remain as open space. This is due primarily to the limitations of slope, soil and the lack of public water and sewer. Further development sprawl is of little value

to the town's economy and budget as suburban development would derive the benefits of municipal convenience without contributing to the municipal tax base.

Land Use Implementation

Zoning and subdivision controls in the areas outside the Westernport corporate limits are the responsibility of Allegany County. However, Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland provides that Allegany County must coordinate with Westernport in the review of all rezoning and subdivision applications within one mile of Westernport's corporate limits. Allegany County, however, retains the right to make all decisions.

The town, for its own protection, must take an active interest in planning matters within this one mile zone. Furthermore, the town should work with the county to insure that Allegany County's comprehensive plan, zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations reflect town desires for this area.

Westernport should continue to cooperate with the town of Piedmont, West Virginia in matters of mutual concern and opportunity.

WESTERNPORT, MD. VICINITY

LAND USE PLAN

- Low Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Public & Institutional
- Industrial
- Recreation / Open Space

WESTERNPORT PLANNING COMMISSION

THE PREPARATION OF THIS MAP WAS FINANCED IN PART THROUGH A COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING GRANT FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AS ADMINISTERED BY THE MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF STATE PLANNING

COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN

Introduction

Over the past ten years Westernport has taken a number of successful steps to improve community facilities. For example, a new fire station, library, swimming pool, park and post office and storm drains have been constructed. Good community facilities make a community a more attractive place to live.

Continued operation and maintenance of community facilities is increasingly difficult in the face of diminishing tax revenues and rising costs. Therefore, careful programming of community facilities and research toward alternative sources of funds is an absolute necessity. Map #3 illustrates the Community Facilities Plan for Westernport.

Community Facilities

Goal - Provide the widest possible range of community services for all citizens with maximum efficiency.

Police Department

This department continues to provide a high level of service to the community through equipment and training financed through general revenues and law enforcement grants.

Objectives

1. Provide training and up-to-date equipment for the police department.

2. Maintain a minimum force of five police officers to provide 24 hour service.

3. Develop a program to establish direct communications with law enforcement personnel.

4. Explore other avenues of funding to increase police protection capability.

Fire Department

The volunteer fire department is housed in a new building on Main Street. Ten cents of the annual municipal tax enables this department to partially meet its financial obligations. A new vehicle has been purchased.

Objectives

1. Continue to subsidize fire department operations through the fire fund tax.

2. Cooperate with other volunteer fire departments so as to insure areawide fire protection.

3. Repair, rehabilitate or rebuild those town thoroughfares that have been identified as a hindrance to fire vehicle access.

4. Adopt voluntary programs that encourage citizens to eliminate fire hazards.

Health Care

Health care can be examined in two parts. First, emergency rescue and ambulance service is now available to all citizens of the Tri-Towns area. Volunteers have taken extensive first aid courses as a part of this program. Continued community support will guarantee the continuation of this program.

Medical and dental care has been less than ideal for several years because the few full-time practitioners in the area have a heavy case load. Early in 1975 a physician moved to Westernport to begin a new practice. His immediate acceptance by the community is indicative of the need for medical care. The medical trade area of Westernport could easily sustain another physician and a dentist.

The Allegany Health Department has a public health nurse who visits Westernport twice a week. Also, this department maintains a food stamp program and provides speech therapy as needed.

Long range plans call for the eventual construction of a health care building in which all health care offices, both private and public, could be consolidated. The same plans call for the location of this facility in downtown as one element of the downtown rehabilitation program.

Objectives

1. Continue to support a well-equipped and trained volunteer emergency rescue service.

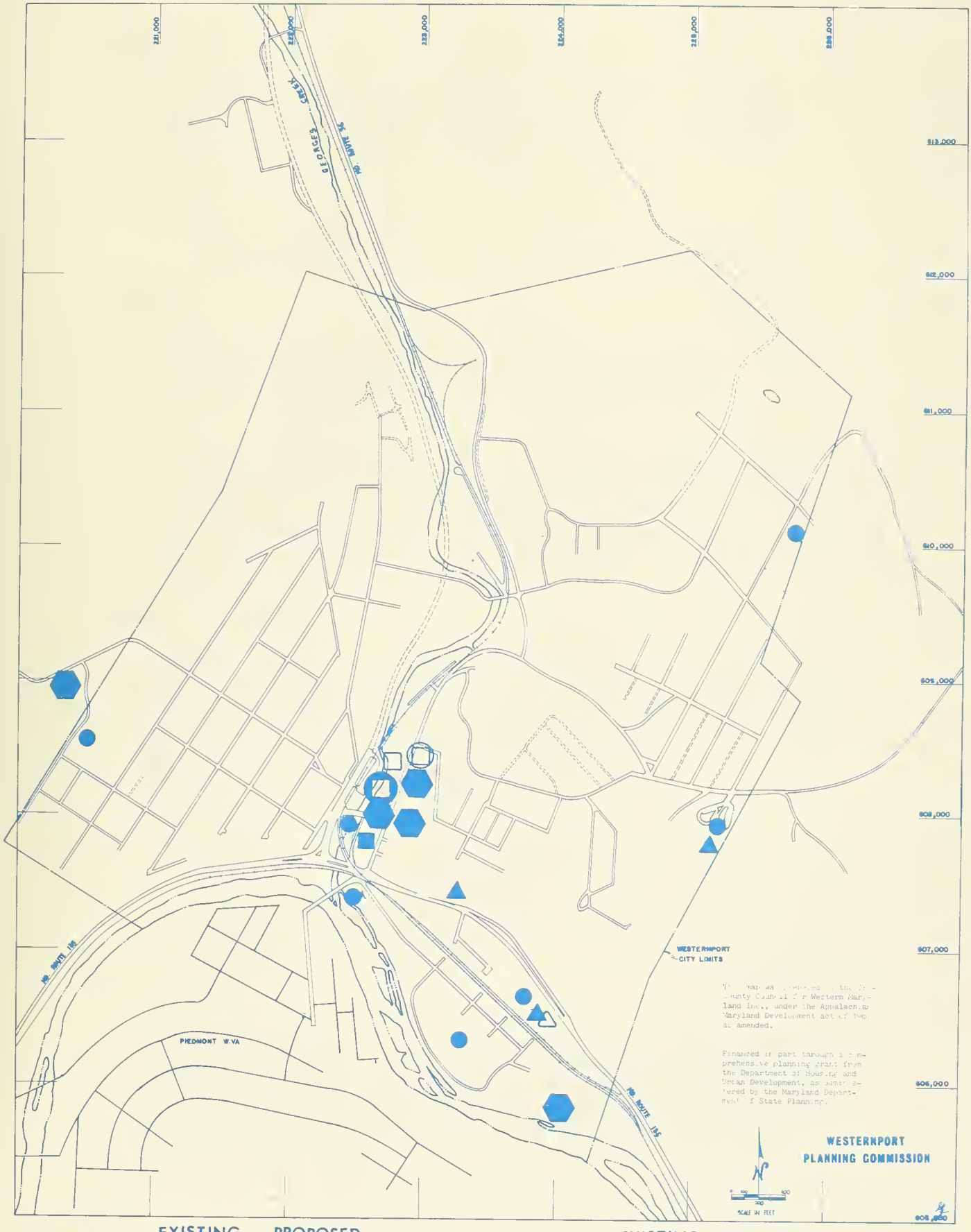
2. Encourage new medical personnel to locate in Westernport.

3. Replace the existing public health center.

4. Explore the possibilities of constructing a multi-service center to house an array of health care programs and services.

5. Seek cooperation with and take advantage of the resources available through the Health Planning Council for Appalachia Maryland and the County Health Department.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES
WESTERNPORT MARYLAND



	EXISTING	PROPOSED
GOVERNMENT SERVICES	⬢	⬡
EDUCATION	▲	△

	EXISTING	PROPOSED
RECREATION	●	○
HEALTH	■	□
FIRE/RESCUE	◉	◎

Library

A new branch library was built along Main Street. This alleviated an overcrowding problem in the town hall identified in the original plan. This structure provides ample shelf space and off-street parking.

Objective

1. Support the continued use and development of the county branch library.

Education

Allegany County has primary responsibility for public education facilities. Current plans call for the reconstruction of Westernport Elementary School on the present site.

St. Peter's Elementary School is the only other local school. This, of course, is supported by the tuition of the students. Frostburg State College, Allegany Community College and Potomac State in Keyser, West Virginia offer programs of higher education and enhance both the opportunity of young people to develop to their full potential and the desirability of Westernport as a place to live.

Solid Waste Disposal

Allegany County has responsibility for developing a solid waste disposal program. Vale Summit is the present location of the county landfill. New sites to meet future needs are being investigated. Westernport not only has a regular trash collection program but from time to time larger items are packed up as a part of a clean up and fire prevention program.

Objectives

1. Continue to provide regular trash pick-up so as to maintain a good appearance of the town.

2. Coordinate with Allegany County in developing a solid waste disposal program.

Water System

The need for a public water supply was fully documented in the Background Report. The Savage River impoundment provides two million gallons of water per day. The county master plan for water provides for this source to not only supply Westernport but a water service area that extends up George's Creek to south of Lonaconing.

Since Westernport sold $374,000 in bonds in 1956 for general improvements to the water system it has been important for the town to collect sufficient funds from all customers to meet this debt and continue to maintain the system. A flat rate billing system was developed but over the years this monitoring method has proved to be an inadequate means of measuring water consumption and leakage. Meters installed for all water customers can guarantee that everyone will pay only for water used and in fact cut down on wasteful water use practices which unnecessarily increase treatment and pumping costs. Recognizing this, the Mayor and Council in January 1975 took action toward a full metering of all water customers.

Maintenance and improvements to the water distribution system constitute the bulk of needed activity associated with the water system. Chief among these would be to install a loop around the downtown area to improve firefighting capability.

Sewerage System

The present Westernport sanitary sewer system is a combined system which handles domestic waste, the town's industrial waste, and the majority of the storm water. The original sewer system was designed to discharge all storm and sewage wastes into the nearest drainage channel or to the Potomac River and George's Creek.

In 1958, the town of Westernport, in a public referendum, voted approval of sewage treatment and decided to join with the pulp and paper company for handling of sanitary and industrial wastes. In 1960, the sewage treatment plan was placed in service and later the sanitary wastes of Westernport were intercepted and transmitted to the new sewage treatment plant.

The collection system is designed primarily for a dry weather flow. This means that the system can take only sanitary flows. With the addition of storm water to this system, a heavy overload is created during periods of rainfall and backup would result if diversions were not employed. The sewer system is designed with diversion points to discharge the overload of the system into drainage ways during the periods of high storm water input.

The existing topography of Westernport presents no unusual problems in the collection of domestic and industrial wastes. The rate of rise or fall in the area varies considerably with slopes of 20 to 30 percent not uncommon. This eliminates the need for pumping or lift stations.

The present sewage treatment facilities for the town are provided by an activated sludge plant for pulp and paper wastes owned by the Upper Potomac River Commission. The sewage treatment plant is also designed to handle domestic wastes from Luke, Maryland and Piedmont, West Virginia.

The activated sludge plant is designed for a capacity of 21 million gallons per day (mgd). It is estimated that the plant will handle approximately 95 percent pulp and paper mill wastes and some 5 percent municipal sewage with all three municipalities tied into the system.

The design volume of flow from the pulp and paper mill is approximately 26 mgd. Of this, 6 mgd will be processed by the paper mill. The paper mill wastes are lower in biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) and high in suspended solids, so treatment of this flow is being provided by a primary clarifier located on the mill site, with the clarified effluent discharged to the stream. The remaining estimated 20 mgd produced by the pulp mill will be combined with the estimated one mgd municipal sewage flow. This accounts for the design capacity of 21 mgd for the activated sludge plant.

There are cases on record where the addition of industrial wastes has been of definite benefit to municipal sewage treatment because of such factors as the presence of alkalinity which overcomes acidity conditions, and of iron wastes that stimulate sewage coagulation. Westernport offers an example of a reverse benefit based on the ability of the municipal contributed sewage to supply nutrients and make pulp and paper mill wastes more amenable to activated sludge treatment.

From a review of the existing sanitary system it is concluded that the existing trunk sewer system is inadequate to handle the combination of sanitary waste and storm runoff. It is suggested that the storm water drainage presently connected to the sanitary system be removed as soon as possible and that all future construction of both sanitary and storm drainage be in separate systems.

1. This program would greatly reduce the necessity of diverting sanitary sewage along with storm runoff during periods of heavy rainfall.

2. A policy of separate sanitary and storm facilities should be maintained on all future sewer construction.

3. All future development within the corporate limits of Westernport and in the surrounding area is to be accommodated by the extension of the present sanitary system.

4. The present sewage treatment plant capacity appears to be adequate for several years, although the degree of treatment to remove objectionable color could be increased.

Storm Drainage

Adequate drainage of the storm water is an important consideration in urban areas, particularly in an area where the topography

is such that the runoff is very rapid. The runoff may create no problem over agricultural land or in sparsely populated areas where the ground is able to absorb most of the flow. The paving of streets and construction of buildings greatly increase the amount of runoff, and the necessity of avoiding standing and flooding of the residential subdivisions makes good drainage essential. The handling of rainwater may be accomplished by means of existing water ways and open drainage ditches.

The present storm drainage system in Westernport consists of a combined system and a limited number of separate drains. A portion of the storm water is delivered to the sanitary sewers and eventually to the sewer plant and must be pumped through the sewage treatment plant. This results in a higher flow through the plant than would normally be expected.

The primary storm drainage problem in Westernport is that the size of the sanitary sewers is inadequate to handle the storm flows. Many of the trouble spots on the sanitary system are directly related to overloading of these sanitary sewers by storm water backup.

Due to the differences in the characteristics between sanitary sewage flows and storm water flows, it is highly desirable to have separate systems for each. The town of Westernport should institute a program of separation of storm drainage from these sanitary sewers. Continuation of a policy of separate sanitary and storm facilities should be followed in all future sewer construction. Any adopted subdivision regulations should contain a policy by which approval is given only where adequate provision is made for storm drainage.

Water, Sewerage, Storm Water Objectives

1. Service all citizens within the corporate limits of Westernport with these utilities.

2. Extend water and sewer lines beyond the corporate limits only to areas that are most suited for development and where the developer will accept annexation to Westernport.

3. Expand sewerage treatment facilities so that package treatment plants are used only as a temporary measure.

4. Eliminate storm and ground water infiltration from sanitary sewer lines to increase the capacity of the sewage treatment plant.

5. Seek cooperation and coordination with the Allegany County Water and Sanitary Commission and the Upper Potomac River Commission in water and sewer planning and programming.

6. Replace and repair water transmission lines as needed so as to eliminate excessive water losses and to guarantee sufficient funds for future capital expenditures.

7. Install water meters to all water customers to equalize water costs and to better conserve this precious resource.

8. Utilize funds from water revenues to maintain and improve the water system only.

9. Levy a sewer fee based on water consumption. This action will reduce expenditure of limited tax revenues. A subdivision ordinance should require sewage system extension be provided by the developer.

Recreation

Goal - Provide a balanced recreation program suited to the needs of all citizens on a year-round basis.

Since 1964 when Westernport had virtually no recreation facilities, much has been accomplished. A town park is now complete with a swimming pool, tennis courts, picnic area and parking. Further acquisition and development is anticipated on Green Street to provide recreation opportunity on the east side of town. School grounds continue to provide a space for organized recreational activity.

The Citizen Questionnaire completed in May of 1974 indicated a strong desire for new and expanded recreation programs for most age categories including youngsters under five and senior citizens, plus a community recreation center. Plans for a redeveloped downtown should allow for commercial recreation space such as bowling, billiards, pin-ball, etc.

Recreation Objectives

1. Complete construction of the municipal park.

2. Develop a playground in the northeast quadrant of the town.

3. Promote the use of county and state facilities as a part of the town's recreation program.

4. Encourage commercial recreation activity within the town.

5. Require that the municipal pool be self-supporting and seek to develop a self-supporting program for other park facilities.

6. Seek to develop cooperative activity programming with the Allegany County Parks and Recreation Commission.

Municipal Services and Property

Goal - Provide responsive municipal service to all Westernport citizens.

Since the town hall was remodeled, more than adequate space is available for the clerk to perform necessary municipal business. The remodeling also provided audience space for town meetings. The garage off Rock Street gives town maintenance crews needed space for trucks and equipment necessary to perform all municipal work.

The most pressing demands on municipal government do not revolve around work space but around the ability to complete work. Each year, management of the town's programs becomes more complex, requiring more time to accomplish given tasks. No community with ever increasing demands for service from its citizens and rising costs can solve its problems on its own. The cooperation of the county, state and federal government can assist in the completion of many local tasks. This is why county agencies such as Public works or Planning; state agencies such as Economic and Community Development or Natural Resources; and other agencies like the Maryland Municipal League or Tri-County Council for Western Maryland are willing to provide technical support to communities like Westernport.

The burden, however, lies in the hands of Westernport citizens to identify projects, establish priorities and manage the total package through careful fiscal management and capital improvements planning.

Municipal Service Objectives

1. Adopt a strict municipal fiscal management program.

2. Balance the municipal budget even if service curtailment is necessary.

3. Continue to prepare a realistic, long range capital improvements program in conformance with the development plan that can be amended where financial forces change.

4. Recognizing that some necessary and unnecessary municipal services can never be self-supporting, add or drop those extra services that could be self-supporting within the constraints of the municipal budget.

5. Pursue grants-in-aid from federal and state governments to provide needed capital improvements after an analysis of the full impact of the grant program has been made and an assessment shows the town can afford to maintain the new program.

6. Encourage all citizens to work with elected officials in promoting the advantages of living and working in Westernport.

7. Promote a program of two-way communication between government and citizen.

8. Continue to affiliate with the Maryland Municipal League and seek the technical services of the Department of State Planning, the Allegany County Planning Commission, the Tri-County Council for Western Maryland, and the Health Planning Council of Appalachia Maryland.

9. Where possible, cooperate with Luke and Piedmont, West Virginia on all matters of mutual concern and benefit.

TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Goal - Develop a transportation system that systematically moves all citizens and goods in an efficient manner regardless of the mode of travel.

This portion of the plan addresses a transportation network that includes major thoroughfares, country roads, local streets, sidewalks, parking and public transportation.

Westernport's problems related to transportation in many instances are due to steep grades, narrow streets, dead ends, poor alignment of intersections, improper assignment of roadway function, poor access, unfavorable lighting and street identification, and very little residential or commercial off-street parking.

The purpose, then, of a transportation plan is to focus on specific problems, suggest solutions, and provide direction for future street alignments. The result will not only be a more efficient transportation flow but a framework for orderly subdivision and land development in the community.

This plan, portrayed on Map #4, Thoroughfare Plan, assigns a function to all streets in Westernport and vicinity. By carefully examining the type of traffic volume and density of development, a function can be assigned resulting in a more orderly pattern of traffic flow.

Classification of highways and streets in Westernport and vicinity are listed in Table 1, Highway and Street Standards.

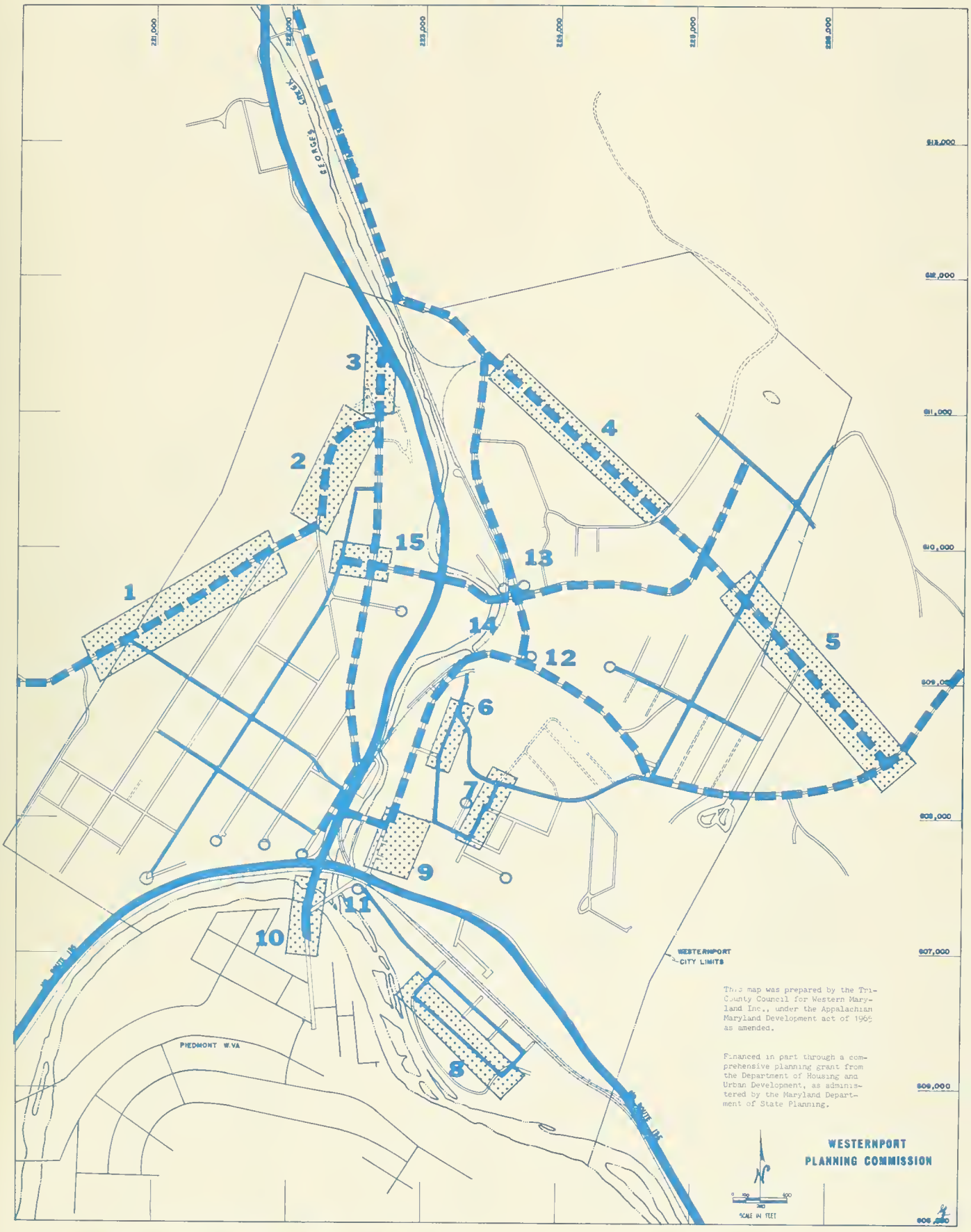
Compliance with these minimum standards will provide for economies in safety, efficiency and maintenance cost. Zoning and subdivision ordinances will generally guarantee compliance with these standards.

Major Thoroughfares

There are four elements of the major thoroughfares network around Westernport. The elements are: Maryland Route 36, Maryland Route 135. U. S. Route 220, and the Potomac River Bridge to Piedmont, West Virginia.

1. Route 36 - State highway plans call for the relocation of Route 36 from the Potomac River northward along George's Creek to U. S. 40 east of Frostburg from where it will continue northward to Pennsylvania. A short portion of the road was constructed during the late 1960's from its intersection with Route 135 to 500 feet north of the American Legion building. In 1974, construction began to extend the new road to south of Barton. Completion of this segment will eliminate traffic on Main Street not destined for Westernport. Completion time of the entire highway is uncertain due to state cutbacks in highway construction funds as a result of declining revenues from the state

TRANSPORTATION PLAN
WESTERNPORT MARYLAND



MAJOR THOROUGHFARE

ARTERIAL

COLLECTOR

MINOR STREETS

IMPROVEMENT AREAS

Table 1

HIGHWAY AND STREET STANDARDS
Westernport

Type of Facility	Function	Right-of-Way Width (in feet)	Pavement Width (in feet)	Comments
Major Thoroughfare	Direct connection to areas outside of town	150	12'/Lane	Generally no parking permitted - minor access control
Arterial	Direct connection to areas within town	80	60	Stop signs on intersection streets. Controlled parking.
Collector	Primary internal streets	60	36	Two-way movement. Parking on both sides. 200' minimum sight distance.
Minor Street	Access to abutting property	50	26	Off-street driveways required.
		40	16 one-way parking one side	Off-street driveways required.
Cul-de-Sac	Street open at one end with provision for a turn-around at the other end	60	40 curb radius - no parking.	Provided where grade is 5% or less.
Dead Ends		50	20- 12" minimum turn-around	Neither should exceed a length greater than 500.

gasoline tax. Completion of this north/south highway will provide fast, safe access to U. S. 48 - the National Freeway - an east-west interstate facility located 17 miles north of Westernport.

2. Route 135 - Maryland's twenty year highway needs study (1975 to 1994) lists as "non-critical" a Westernport by-pass from the Garrett County line to four miles east at Stony Run. From this point the same study calls for a four lane divided reconstruction of Route 135 three miles east to the intersection of U. S. 220. Given the steepness of the hillsides east and west of the municipal boundary, it would seem most unlikely that a "by-pass" could ever be constructed. Improvements to traffic signals, street lights and lane marking could ease the flow of east-west traffic on Route 135 through town. Improvements to Route 135 east of town including the intersection with U. S. 220 would improve access to Westernport.

3. U. S. 220 - improvements to this highway are listed as "critical" in the state's twenty year highway needs study. U. S. 220 is designated as the major Appalachia interstate highway from Keyser, West Virginia north to Cortland, New York. Improvements to this highway located five miles east of Westernport via Route 135 would open this apparently remote town to the markets of many east coast cities and the Ohio Valley.

4. Potomac River Bridge - completion of the improvements to Route 36 from its intersection with Route 135 north to Barton by 1978 will reduce the capability of the Potomac River Bridge to serve its function as it will be out of alignment with Route 135/36 intersection. In essence this "dog-leg" will slow down north/south traffic flow.

   The Potomac River Bridge is already too narrow for the amount of traffic it handles daily. Large trucks and fire/rescue vehicles have difficulty crossing the Potomac at this point. Improvements to Routes 36, 135 and 220 could conceivably generate additional traffic flows as the adjacent communities (Luke, Piedmont and Westernport) attempt to foster economic development by using the new highways as an attraction to industry. Obviously the Potomac River Bridge would only serve as an obstacle to traffic flow improvement.

   The state twenty year highway needs study lists this bridge as "non-critical". Even before relocated Route 36 opens, local efforts should be made to change this rating so that planning and construction of a new bridge can commence. (See item #10 on Map #4).

Arterials

Arterial streets are designed to provide access to focal points within the town. Rock Street and Lincoln Drive currently serve as arterial streets and collector streets. However, the steepness of the east and west slopes combined with the difficulties of maneuvering heavy trucks and school buses make it imperative that access be improved and these functions separated where possible.

The plan recommends that Rock Street at a point slightly below the municipal garage (see item #1, Map #4) be continued downslope in a northeasterly direction, taking advantage of more favorable grades and linking it with Morrison Street, which eventually intersects with Division Street; extend Division Street and curve downslope to intersect with Wood Street. Wood Street should then be extended northward to intersect with relocated Zone 36. (See Map #4, items #2 and 3.)

Improvements have been made to Lincoln Drive which provide easier access to Bruce High, Horse Rock, Marsh subdivision and neighborhoods along Central Avenue and Green Street. Problems occur when coal trucks must use this road from strip mines on Dan's Mountain. These larger vehicles have difficulty due to the steepness of the grade of Lincoln Drive, especially in the first block east of Main Street. Fully loaded trucks attempting to hold the road while traveling downhill have damaged the road bed. Westernport has little or no opportunity to capture its losses in maintaining this road. Lane markings and curbs are needed at the Lincoln Drive/Main Street intersection to improve traffic safety.

The plan recommends that Baughman Street (see items #4 and 5 on Map #4) be extended in two directions to intersect with Route 36 (item #4) and Stony Run Road (item #5) to take advantage of more favorable grades and to separate intercounty traffic from traffic bound to places within Westernport.

Ross Street is only eleven feet wide in some portions but it is an important link between Main Street and the Marsh subdivision area. The plan recommends that this roadway be improved to serve as a two-way arterial. (see item #16 on Map #4). This would not only better serve the existing Marsh subdivision area but it will be able to handle additional traffic as this portion of town develops.

Waverly Street (item #15 on Map #4) should be extended one block west and terminate at an intersection with Walnut Street. This addition will facilitate the movement of traffic up Westernport hill.

Once relocated Route 36 is finished beyond Westernport through traffic will be eliminated from Main Street. This will allow Main Street to function as an arterial roadway providing direct access to areas within town. The reduction of unnecessary traffic on Main Street will make it easier for downtown shoppers to reach their destination, making downtown a more pleasant place to shop.

The closing of Main Street between Washington Street and Route 135 to create a mall would necessitate that Washington Street become an arterial roadway. This will allow shoppers ease of travel around the mall plus provide adequate space for emergency vehicles and buses. (See item #9 on Map #4)

Collectors

Collector streets function as primary internal streets providing movement between minor streets and arterials. To provide for two-way traffic flows and parking on both sides, pavement width from curb to curb should be a minimum of 36 feet.

Streets identified on Map #4 as collectors should be improved where necessary to meet higher roadway width standards. Reconstruction, one-way traffic, or possibly the control of parking may be solutions to the problem.

The list of collector streets includes:

Johnson Street
Rock Street between Poplar and Front Streets
Walnut Street
Philos Avenue
Oakview Drive
Likens Street
Maryland Avenue
Central Avenue
Howard Street
Marsh Street

Minor Streets

The primary function of minor streets is to provide access to adjacent property. The 26 foot pavement width is sufficient for two-way traffic and for one lane of parallel parking. Additional parking should be provided by individual driveways. With one-way movement the pavement width can be reduced to 16 feet. In hillside areas street widths can be reduced safely if a one-way or loop street system is developed. Pavement 20 feet wide with U-gutters and parking bays reduces the amount of cut and fill, storm water runoff and costs for construction and maintenance.

Additional plan recommendations depicted on Map #4, Thoroughfare Plan, to the local street network are:

1. Construct a new one-way street between Philos and Oakview Drive at the point where they are closest together (see item #6). This will complete a one-way loop providing better access and more manageable traffic flow.

2. Straighten Howard Street and its intersection with Smoot Street (see item #7).

3. Widen the alley behind Maryland Avenue near the ball field to provide an interior loop in this neighborhood for emergency vehicle access. Widening should extend far enough to allow for parking bays to relieve parking deficiency on Maryland Avenue (see item #8).

4. Following the opening of new Route 36 and the commitment to develop downtown, close Main Street between Washington Street and Route 135 to create a mall. Construct a service road/ parking lot on the east side of the mall to provide access for shoppers and deliveries (see item #9).

5. Four intersections need improvements to aid traffic flow, sight distances and safety in general. These four are:

   Maryland Avenue and Route 135 (item #11)
   Lincoln Drive and Main Street (item #12)
   Waverly Street and Main Street (item #13)
   Waverly Street and Railroad/White Streets (item #14)

6. Extend Waverly Street to intersect with Wood Street (item #15).

Cul-de-Sacs and Dead-Ends

An unfortunate result of applying grid patterns to the topography of Westernport is the number of dead-end streets. This section of the plan will attempt to accomplish two objectives:

1. Recommend ways to improve vehicle access and movement where dead-ends cannot be opened.

2. Recommend the proper use of cul-de-sacs and dead-end streets.

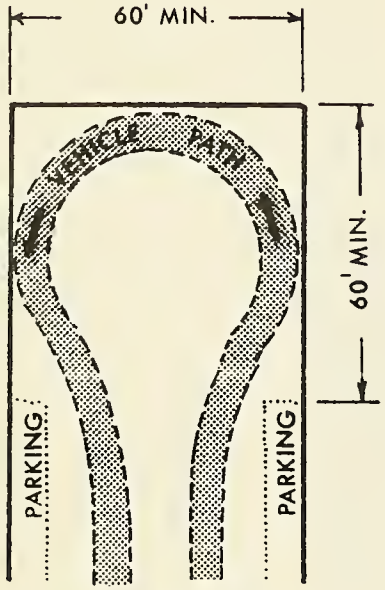
Figure #3, Types of Cul-de-Sac and Dead End Streets illustrates the various options available in the treatment of cul-de-sacs and dead-ends. The measurements provided allow for safe access by automobiles, delivery trucks, sanitation crews and fire vehicles. Two factors will influence the choice between a cul-de-sac and a "Y", "T" or branch style "back around": topography and cost. In areas where the grade is greater than 10 percent, the more expensive cul-de-sac becomes even more costly because of the amount of cut and fill required. However, the "back around" is only useful when a small number of homes is served. In either case, no parking should be permitted within these traffic devices.

The following streets are recommended for installations of a cul-de-sac or turn-around:

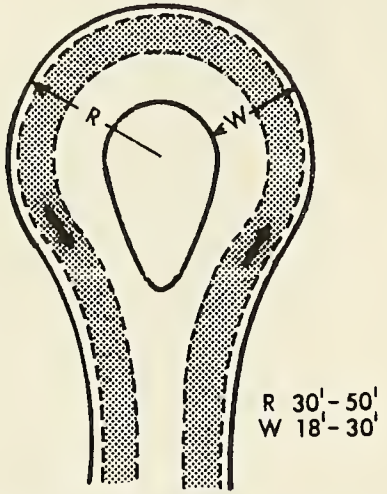
Front Street
Hammond Street
Vine Street
Walnut Street at Luke Road

TYPES OF CUL-DE-SAC AND DEAD-END STREETS

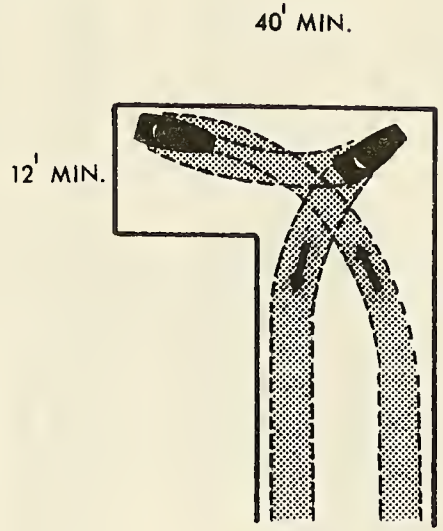
Figure 3



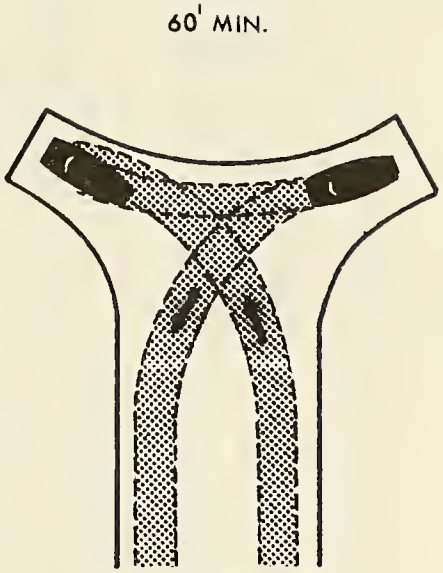
SQUARE END-ALL PAVED



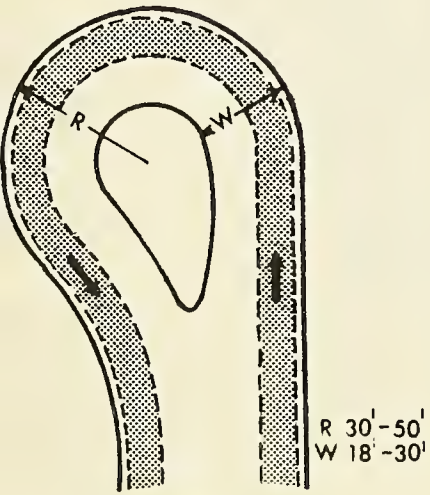
CIRCULAR-WITH CENTER PLANTER



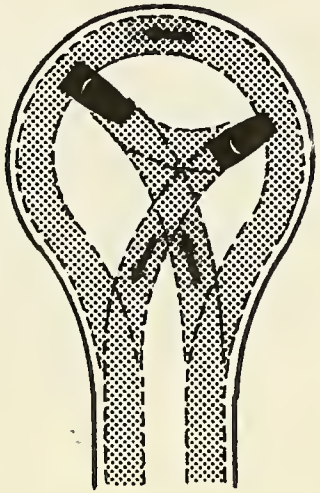
L-TYPE



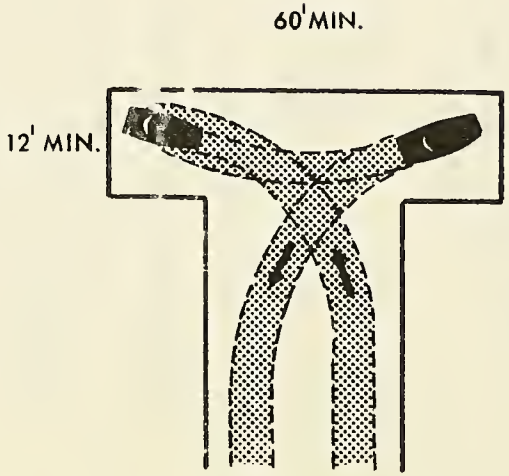
Y-TYPE



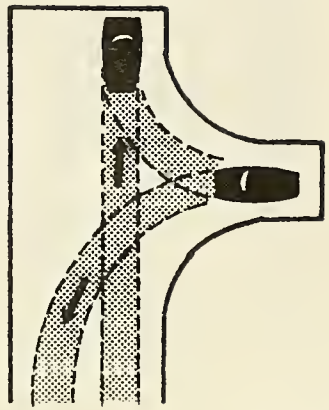
CIRCULAR-OFFSET



CIRCULAR ALL PAVED



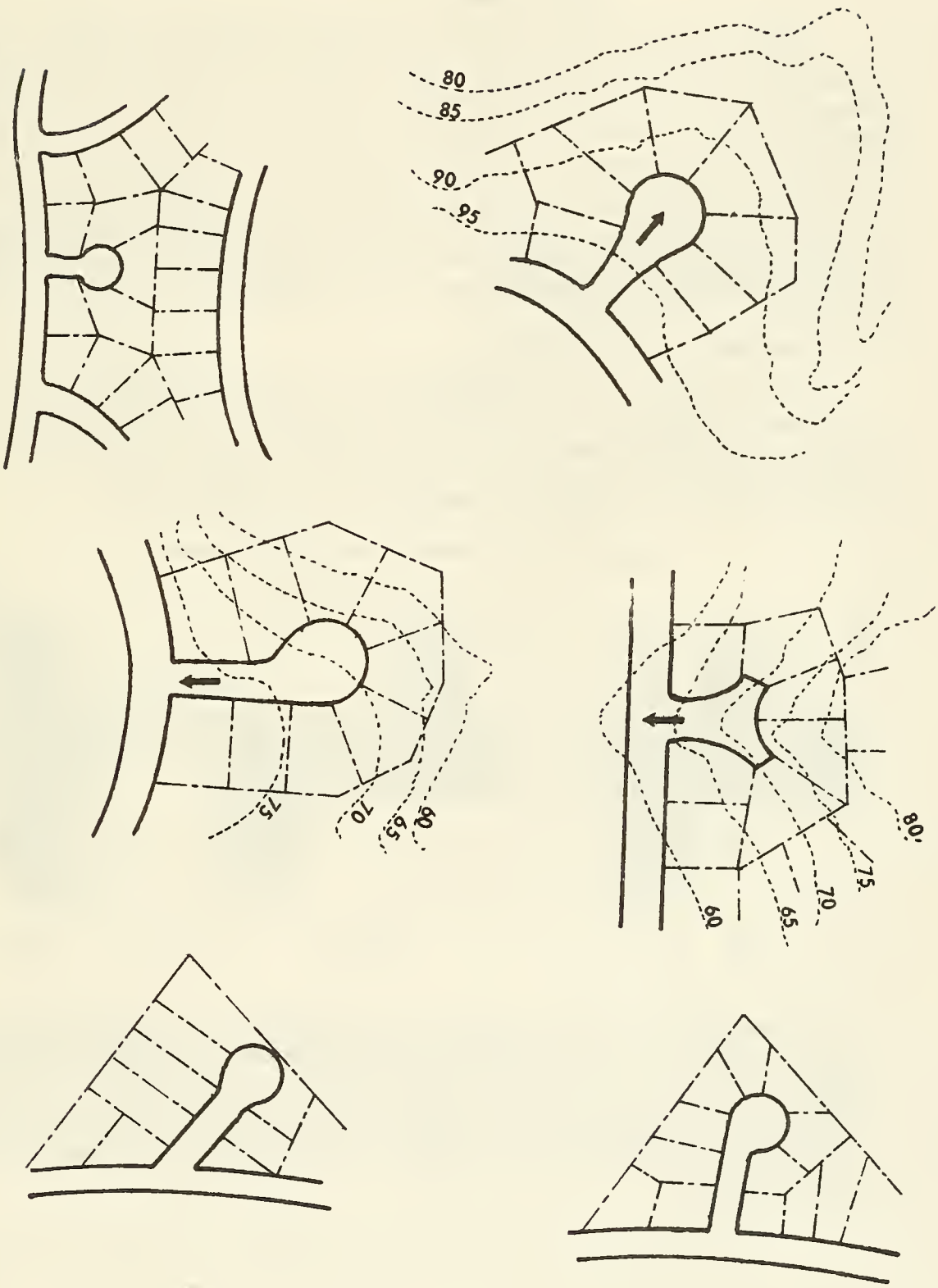
T-TYPE



BRANCH

CUL-DE-SACS AND THEIR USES

Figure 4



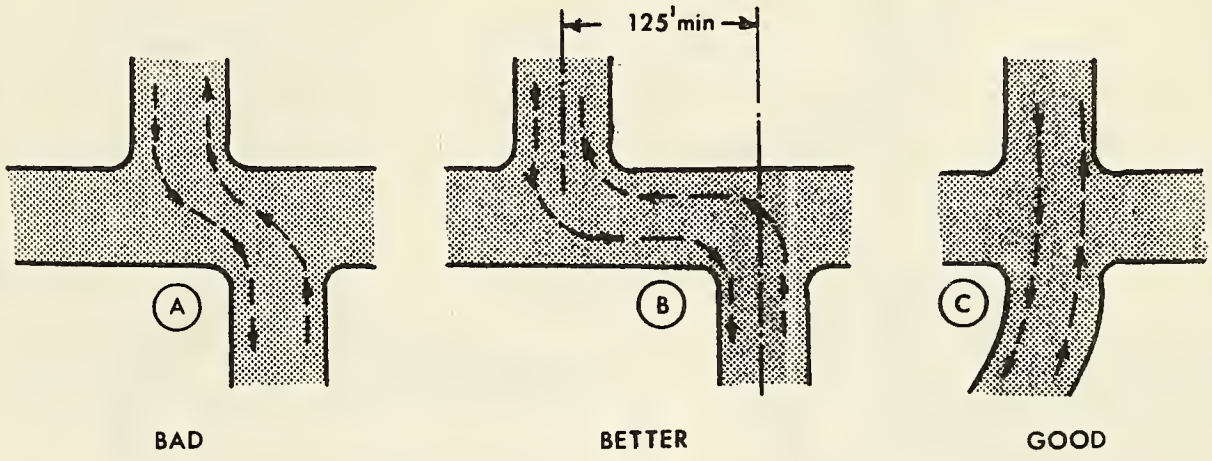
Kalbaugh Street
Cromer Street
Jameson Street
Central Avenue

Proper use of cul-de-sacs or turn arounds allow for the development of odd lots or clustering of lots where part of the subdivision has unfavorable development potential. Less paving material is required where these devices are used, and if a central drain is installed and the pavement is "dished" toward the middle there is no need for curbs or gutters - a further reduction in cost. Lots facing on a cul-de-sac or turn around are often the most desirable because there is no through traffic and privacy is guaranteed. Figure #4 illustrates cul-de-sacs and their uses given variations in topography and offers suggestions for proper lotting to avoid odd-shaped properties that will not sell.

Intersections

For reasons of traffic safety, all intersections should meet at 90 degree angles. It is also important to design and maintain clear sight distance at intersections. This section will illustrate recommended intersection design including ideas to permit improved sight distances through the location of buildings on individual lots.

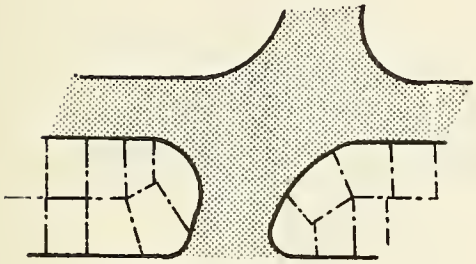
Figure #5, Standards for Intersections



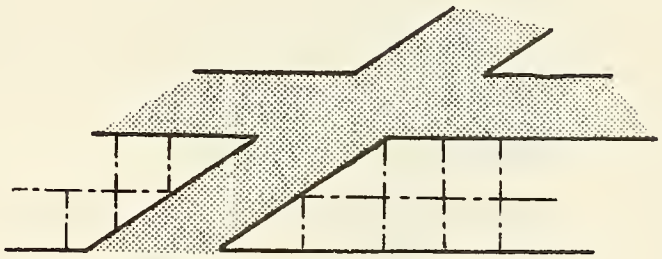
Slight jobs in traffic flow as diagrammed in "A" are undesirable. Vision is hampered for all directions of traffic. A minimum of 125 to 150 feet between intersections causes traffic to break this particular movement into two parts which increases the margin of safety. The best alternative is diagrammed in "C" where the roadway is designed to meet the cross street at a 90 degree angle. Traffic flows in a continuous, smooth manner.

Angles of intersections less than 75 degrees waste pavement, hinder traffic safety and result in poor lot arrangement.

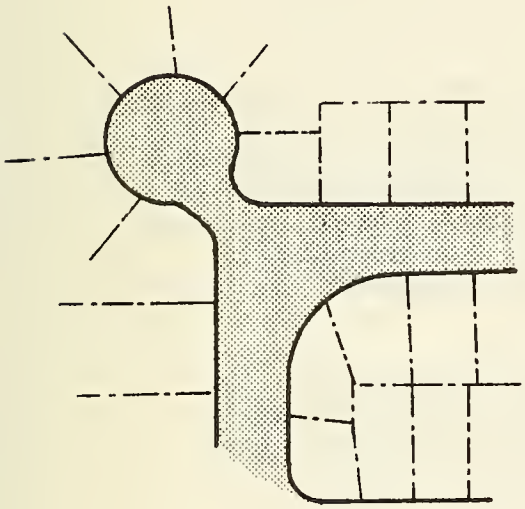
Figure #6, Common Mistakes in Street Alignment and Lotting



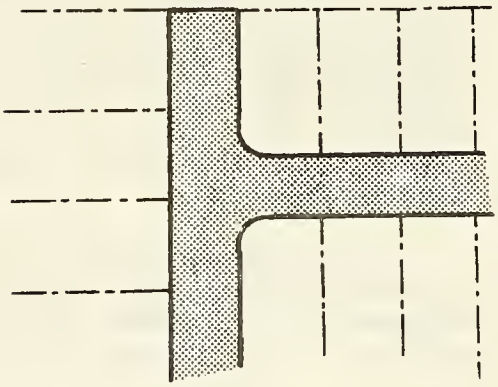
This



Not This



This*

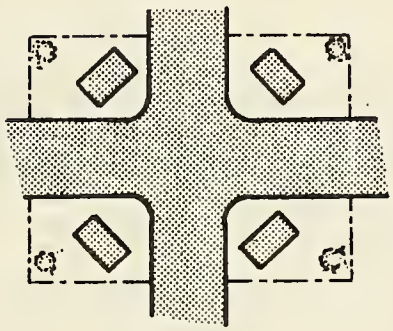


Not This

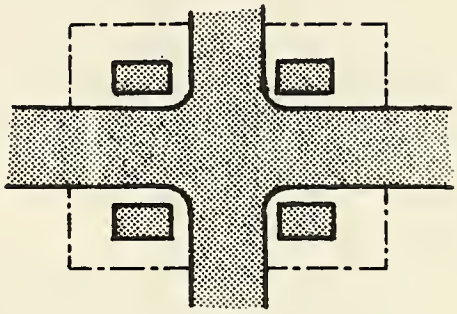
* Where future street extensions are not required.

Sight distance at intersections is improved by the proper placement of buildings.

Figure #7, Sight Distances at Intersections



This



Not This

Parking

As an alternative to the materially narrow streets for traffic and on-street parking that already exist in Westernport, the plan suggests the use of parking bays. With existing development, of course, these bays cannot necessarily be located so that everyone parks their automobile in front of his home. But the savings realized to the town as well as the home owner in reduced congestion, increased safety, smoother traffic flow and less sideswipe accidents may make this alternative attractive.

In new developments the use of parking bays should allow the developer to reduce pavement widths since he no longer would need to construct what in effect is a linear parking lot. The less paving would reduce home costs, maintenance and storm water runoff.

Public Transportation

Westernport is served three days a week by the Allegany Transit Authority (ATA). Two trips per day are made on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. The first bus leaves Cumberland for Westernport via Frostburg and south on Route 36 through Westernport and back to Cumberland via Route 220 north. The second bus travels in the opposite direction later in the day. This bus travels south on Route 220 to Westernport then north on Route 36 to Frostburg.

Should a demand for increased service be demonstrated, more frequent trips can be added by the Transit Authority. For now, no new service is planned by the ATA.

Summary

The importance of the transportation element of Westernport's planning program cannot be over emphasized. Careful implementation of the recommendations for transportation not only will provide for improvements to traffic flow but will provide for the orderly subdivision of land. Since the topography of Westernport requires extensive amounts of hillside development, careful street and lot layout is required to preserve the integrity of the landscape. Without proper planning of streets both short term and long term costs will be high. These costs include the grading on steep slopes, excessive storm water runoff due to extensive cutting of trees and the paving over of natural vegetation; lot traffic safety due to steep grades and lot land values due to reduced aesthetic qualities of Westernport as a place to work and live.

Transportation Objectives

1. Eliminate hazardous intersections in the older established portions of town.

2. Establish a functional classification of streets so as to separate local traffic from through traffic.

3. Encourage citizens to utilize the countywide transit system now serving Westernport.

4. Maximize efforts to relocate the Piedmont Bridge in a more favorable alignment with relocated Route 36.

5. Consider the concept of a mall through the commercial area by closing Main Street between Route 135 and Washington Street.

6. Eliminate dead ends where possible by constructing new connectors, cul-de-sacs or turn-arounds.

7. Provide additional off-street parking in the central area and Maryland Avenue. Work with developers to initiate a program to provide off-street parking spaces.

8. Adopt a weight limit ordinance for town streets.

9. Encourage the county to build needed roads to the ridge tops east/west of town to take intercounty traffic off of town streets.

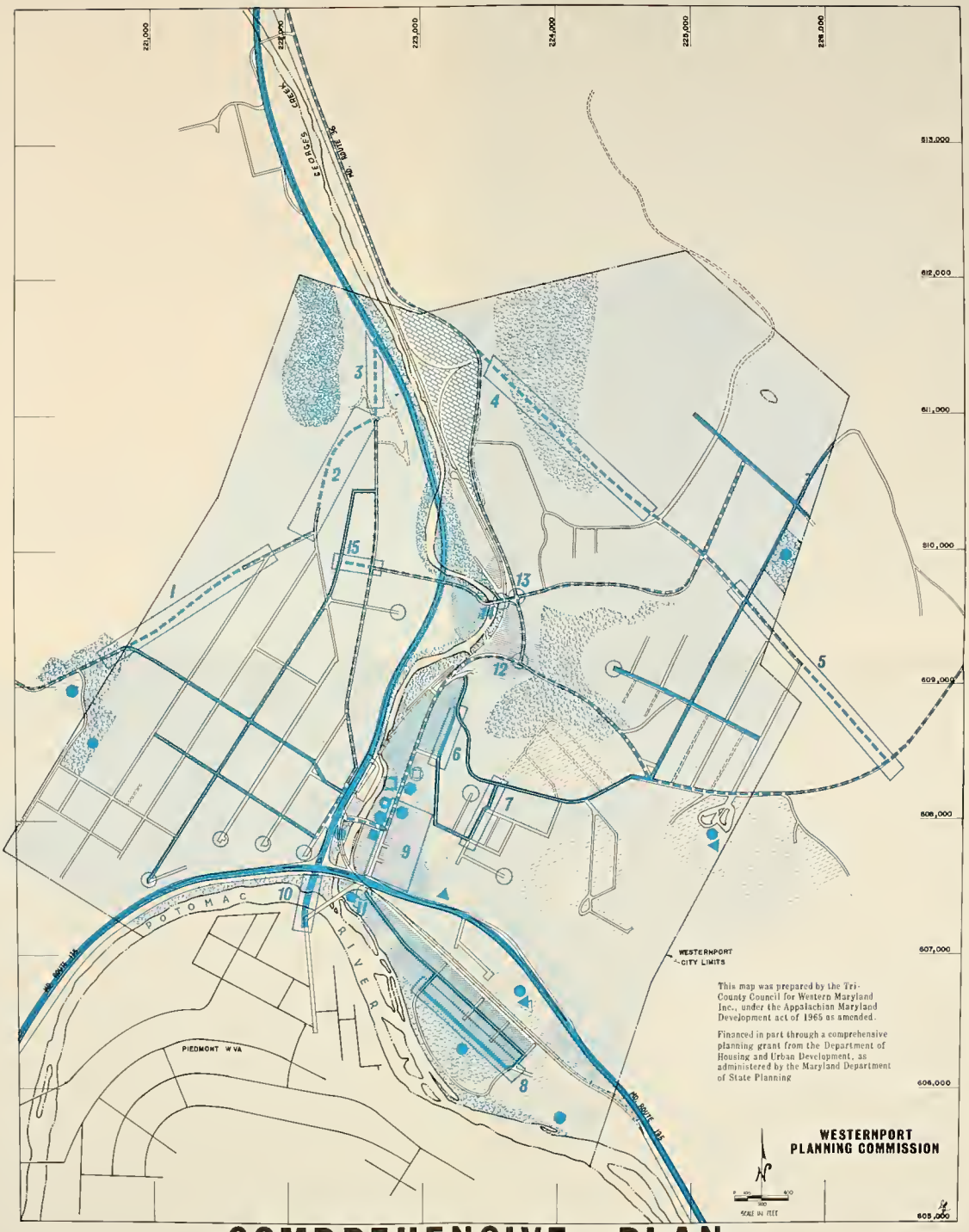
10. Erect street lights and signs where needed.

11. Coordinate all street construction with other town and county agencies.

12. Continue to deliver a good street maintenance program.

13. Increase accessibility to all community activity - even for those without cars.

WESTERNPORT MARYLAND



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

LAND USE

- LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- COMMERCIAL
- PUBLIC & INSTITUTIONAL
- INDUSTRIAL
- RECREATION / PARKS , CONSERVATION

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

	EXISTING	PROPOSED
GOVERNMENT SERVICES	●	○
EDUCATION	▲	△
RECREATION	●	⊗
HEALTH	■	□
FIRE / RESCUE	○	⊙

TRANSPORTATION

- MAJOR THOROUGHFARE
- ARTERIAL
- COLLECTOR
- MINOR STREET IMPROVEMENT AREAS I-15

3 1430 02900710 3

a31430029007103b
UNIV. OF MD. COLLEGE PARK

U. OF MD. LIBRARY